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No Lack Of Issues Or Words

By Nancy Collins
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"Yes, I think this presidential campaign has been overcovered. But I also have a hunch that public interest in the campaign — or lack of it — is going to control the overcoverage," said Tom Winship, editor of the Boston Globe last night as he stood surrounded by his colleagues. "I think the candidates have overstepped their bounds in overpoliticizing the issues. There is a limit to how big a crisis is happening in Iran. Right now I think the public is fed up with the whole thing. I know this certainly isn't one of my favorite presidential campaigns."

Last night the American Society of Newspaper Editors, of which Winship is the new president, opened its annual three-day conference with a cocktail party at the Washington Hilton. And, as might be expected in a roomful of newspaper people, no one was at a loss for words. But then there was a lot to talk about: the severing of diplomatic relations with Iran, announced only hours before by Jimmy Carter; presidential politics and just why these 600 or so editors come to these conferences in the first place.

"The big thing here is getting professional contacts," observed Bill Jarrett, managing editor of the Dallas Times-Herald who said he knew perhaps 50 percent of the editors in the room.

"For me the programs are a side attraction although Thursday ought to be something."

Indeed. On that day a veritable plethora of political potentates will be parading their wares before the editors beginning with breakfast with John Anderson and ending with a banquet whose honored guest will be Zbigniew Brzezinski.

Sandwiched in between will be Stansfield Turner, Henry Kissinger, Teddy Kennedy and Jimmy Carter, who is showing up for lunch — the meal, initially reserved for Henry Kissinger.

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